

# Virginia Argus.

RICHMOND.

FRIDAY, April 23, 1809.

THE opponents to the administration seem confounded at the humiliation of Great Britain. They have all along contended that she would never rescind her Orders of Council during the existence of the French Decrees, that it was her policy not to do it, and almost unjust in us to expect it. She has, however, done so. And what renders them truly ridiculous, is, that they exclusively claim the credit to themselves. What have they done to justify this unparalleled arrogance? They have abused the administration, and execrated every measure as being calculated to advance the views of France and to injure the prosperity of Great Britain. This has been proved to be false by the most clear and irrefragable evidence. They have endeavored to spread distrust and confusion among the people, in which they have met with sufficient success to induce Great Britain to speculate upon the hope of our ruin—to render her more overbearing and inflexible in her system of re-colonization; but now that she finds this prospect illusory and likely to produce her own destruction, she finds it necessary to relax and pay some respect to us, we are told by those very opponents that it is the result of their policy. To make Great Britain admit what they have said she ought never to do, and which she herself confesses proceeds from that very cause, (non intercourse) which has been the peculiar object of their unremitting execrations.

Is there any person so lost in bigotry or so blind with infatuation, as not to see this inconsistency, and not to admit that the policy of our government has either been above the ken of their understanding, or that they were determined to abuse and oppose it whether right or wrong? It is immaterial to what cause the concessions of G. Britain may be ascribed, we have at least her own evidence to warrant us in saying that they have proceeded from the wise system pursued by our government. We are well aware of the trick to which the minority will resort in order to extricate them from a dilemma which threatens to blast their "budding hopes." They will endeavor to impose upon the people a belief that these propositions have been offered to us before, by endeavoring to force them into Monroe's treaty. Altho' his is evidently their design, we must confess that we are totally at a loss to conjecture the mode in which they will conduct it. We feel confident that it is beyond the reach of any political magic, for it is certainly beyond the power of ingenuity, unless it is capable of proving a thing to exist which has never existed. We shall bestow some attention upon this subject in our next.

*The Schooner Washington of Nantucket, (Mass.)*

ON Saturday last this vessel was seized by the custom House officers on her way from this port. The captain, whose name is Samuel W. Kendrick, has been arrested by the Marshal of this district, and being unable to give bail for his appearance at the next court, has been committed to prison. The informant was one of the crew, whose name is Charles Waterman. The following is a very cursory sketch of his evidence. He stated that the vessel cleared out from Nantucket for the port of Richmond, on the 20th of February. Her cargo consisted of Flour, Tobacco, Pork, Beef, Candles, &c. That her cargo was taken in between the hours of 8 and 12 o'clock at night, and immediately set sail. That she cleared out with 4 puncheons of rum, which afterwards proved to be water. Her direction was S. S. East. That a gale of wind arose which carried them to Bermudas. He was then asked if she was compelled by stress of weather, to which he replied in the negative. Her passage from Nantucket to Bermudas was 9 days. He stated the particular prices which the captain received for his Flour, Tobacco, &c. &c. and that he himself saw three large bags of Dollars. That in Bermudas he took in four puncheons of rum, which before had been filled with water. That they were 10 days in Bermudas, and about 14 in coming from thence to Hampton Roads, and about four from the Roads to Richmond. Entered on the 7th of April. It may be proper to remark that the witness admitted that he had a quarrel with the captain in Bermudas, and that this was the motive which urged him to the disclosure. The vessel now lies dismantled at Rockets, and the captain still in confinement. We shall not pretend to give any opinion upon the case until it is fairly before the proper tribunal. It is but just to remark, that the custom house officers acted with becoming zeal and activity.

## Virginia Elections.

FOR THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY.

Hamshire—Alexander King, Francis White.

Berkeley—Philip Pendleton, Magnus Tate.

Shenandoah—Samuel Strickler, ———

Madison—

Hanover—John Bowe, John Starke.

Culpeper—John Roberts, Moses Green. Warwick—John Jones, Wm. Garrow. Norfolk—Wm. C. Holt, George New-ton.

Franklin—Robert Innes, Silas Garrett. Northampton—George Parker, William Dunton.

Charles City—John Christian, Cornelius Egmon.

Powhatan—Edward Johnson, William Archer.

James City—Littleton Tazewell, William E. Barrett.

York—Samuel Shield, Doct. Wm. Tazewell.

Mecklenburg—James Jones, Francis E. Walker.

Lancaster—Spencer George, Samuel M. Shearman.

Northumberland—Hiram Blackwell, Samuel Downing.

Prince Edward—John Purnall, Archer Womack.

Dinwiddie—Robert Pegram, J. Watkins.

Hardy—Christian Simon, ——— Clay- pool.

Campbell—Anselm Lynch, G. Rievely.

Major Stephenson, (fed.) is elected member of Congress in the Berkeley District, by a majority of 230 votes over Col. Morrow, the Republican candidate.

## LETTER OF THE HON. JOHN ADAMS.

In the early part of the last session of Congress, a gentleman holding an office of high responsibility, wrote to Mr. Adams requesting his opinion with respect to the evils which pressed upon our country and the remedy to be applied. The answer has occasioned many conjectures and been the subject of much vague conversation. Wishing to do justice to that candor, which regardless of party prejudice, calls on age and wisdom for counsel, and to that magnanimity, which forgetting personal wrongs, looks only to the honor of our country, we have obtained leave to publish this interesting letter. We cannot anticipate the comments that may be made; but the text is genuine and we subscribe to its orthodoxy.—*Boston Patriot.*

QUINCY, 26th Dec. 1808.

SIR, I RECEIVE very kindly your obliging Letter of the 18th of this month. Ever since my return from Europe, where I had resided ten years, and could not be fully informed of the state of affairs, in my own country, I have been constantly anxious and alarmed at the intemperance of party spirit, and the unbounded license of our presses. In the same view, I could not but lament some things, which have lately passed in public bodies. To instance, at Dedham and Topsfield, and last of all in the resolutions of our Massachusetts legislature. Upon principle, I see no right in our Senate and House to dictate, or advise, or to request our Representatives in Congress.—The right of the people to instruct their representatives is very dear to them, and will never be disputed by me. But this is a very different thing from an interference of a state legislature. Congress must be the "cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night," to conduct this nation; and if their eyes are to be diverted by wandering light accidentally springing up in every direction, we shall never get through the wilderness.

I have not been inattentive to the course of public affairs, and agree with Congress in their resolutions to resist the decrees, edicts and orders of France and England; but I think the king's proclamation for the impressment of seamen on board our merchant ships, has not been distinctly enough reprobated. It is the most groundless pretension of all. Retired as I am, conversing with very few of any party; out of the secret of affairs; collecting information only from public papers and pamphlets, many links in the great chain of deliberations, actions and events, may have escaped me. You will easily believe, that an excessive diffidence in my own opinions has not been "the sin, that has most easily beset me." I must nevertheless confess to you, that in all the intricate combinations of affairs, to which I have ever been a witness, I never found myself so much at a loss to form a judgment of what the nation ought to do, or what part I ought to act. No man, then, I hope, will have more confidence in the solidity of any thing I may suggest, than I have myself.

I reverse the upright and enlightened general sense of our American nation. It is nevertheless capable, like other nations, of general prejudice and national errors. Among these I know not whether there is any more remarkable than that opinion, so universal, that it is in our power to bring foreign nations to our own terms, by withholding our commerce. When the executive and legislative authority of any nation, especially in the old governments and great powers of Europe, have adopted measures, upon deliberation, and published them to the world, they cannot recede, without a deep humiliation and disgrace, in the eyes of their own subjects, as well as all Europe. They will therefore obstinately adhere to them, at the expense even of great sacrifices, and in defiance of great dangers. In 1774, Congress appeared almost unanimously sanguine, that a non importation and consumption association, would procure immediate repeal of Acts of Parliament and Royal Orders. I went heartily along with the rest in all these measures, because I knew, that the sense of the nation, the public opinion in all the colonies required them; and I did not see that they could do harm. But I had no confidence in their success, in any thing but uniting the American People. I expressed this opinion freely to some of my friends, particularly to Mr. Henry, of Virginia, and to Major Hawley, of Massachusetts. These two, and these only, agreed with me in opinion, that we must fight after all. We found by experience, that a war of eight years, in addition to all our resolutions, was necessary; and the aid of France, Spain and Holland too, before our purposes could be accomplished. Do we presume that we can excite Insurrection, Rebellion, and a revolution in England? Even a Revolution would be no benefit to us. A Republican government in England would be

more hostile to us than the Monarchy is. The resources of that country are so great; their Merchants, Capitalists, and principal Manufacturers are so rich, that they can employ their manufactures and store their productions for a long time, perhaps longer than we can, or will bear to hoard ours.

In 1794, upon these principles, and for these reasons, I thought it my duty to decide in Senate against Mr. Madison's Resolutions, as they were called, and I have seen no reason to alter my opinion since. I own I was sorry when the late non importation law passed.—When a war with England was seriously apprehended in 1794, I approved of an embargo as a temporary measure to preserve our seamen and property; but not with any expectation that it would influence England. I thought the embargo which was laid a year ago, a wise and prudent measure, for the same reason, viz. to preserve our seamen and as much of our property as we could get in; but not with the faintest hope that it would influence the British councils. At the same time, I confidently expected, that it would be raised in a few months. I have not censured any of these measures, because I knew the fond attachment of the nation to them; but I think the nation must soon be convinced that they will not answer their expectations. The embargo and the non importation laws, I think ought not to last long. They lay such a foundation of disaffection to the national government as will give great uneasiness to Mr. Jefferson's successor, and will produce such distractions and confusion as I shudder to think of. The naval and military force to carry them into execution would maintain a war. Are you then for war, you will ask? I will answer you candidly: I think a war would be a less evil than a rigorous enforcement of the embargo and a non-intercourse. But we have no necessity to declare war against England or France, or both. We may raise the Embargo, repeal the non importation law, authorize our merchants to arm their vessels; give them special Letters of Marque to defend themselves against all unlawful aggressors; take, burn or destroy all vessels, or make prize of them, as enemies, that shall attack them. In the mean time, apply all our resources to build frigates; some in every principal sea port. These frigates ought not to be assembled in any one port to become an object of a hostile expedition to destroy them. They should be separated and scattered as much as possible, from New Orleans to Passamaquoddy. I never was fond of the plan of building line of battle ships. Our policy is not to fight squadrons at sea; but to have fast sailing frigates to scour the seas, and make impressions on the enemies' commerce; and in this way we can do great things. Our great sea-ports and most exposed frontier places ought not to be neglected in their fortifications; but I cannot see for what purpose an hundred thousand Militia are called out, or why we should have so large an army at present. The revenues applied to these uses would be better appropriated to building frigates. We may depend upon it, we shall never be respected by foreign powers, until they see that we are sensible of the great resources which the Almighty, in his benevolent Providence, has put into our hands. No nation under the sun has better materials, architects, or mariners for a respectable maritime power.—I have no doubt our people, when they see a necessity for the defence, and to support their Union, Independence and National Honor.—When our merchants are armed, if they are taken, they cannot blame the government. If they fight well, and capture their enemies, they will acquire glory and encouragement at home; and England or France may determine for themselves whether they will declare war. I believe neither will do it, because each will be afraid of our joining the other. I either should, in my opinion, the other will rescind; but if we should have both to fight, it would not be long before one or the other would be willing to make peace; and I see not much difference between fighting both and fighting England alone.

My heart is with the Spanish Patriots, and I should be glad to assist them as far as our Commerce can supply them. I conclude with acknowledging that we have received greater injuries from England than from France, abominable as they both have been. Whatever the government determines I shall support as far as my small voice extends.

I am, sir, with respect and esteem, Your humble servant, JOHN ADAMS.

N. B. The tribute and British licences must be prohibited under adequate penalties.

## TO THE PEOPLE.

A Resort courteous for JOHN CLARKE.

In a note lately published in the Enquirer, I understand, that I shall not be allowed the full privilege of replying to John Clarke's actions,rodomontades, and gasconades, until his defence, as he calls it, is ended. He seems now to be completely at a loss. He can't tell where to begin, how to proceed, nor where to end. And seems to be an adept in nothing but vilification. Among other important accusations against my fame, he says I was a candidate for the office which has been so much disgraced by himself, and that I applied to him to obtain the appointment, so great a man was he. Even admitting the truth, I know of no harm, in entertaining or advancing such a wish. I believe I could prove by a thousand persons, to whom I have made the declaration, that I was not a candidate for that office. Whilst John Clarke, like the fable of the man killing the Lyon, will be the sole, the solitary witness to establish this heinous offence.

That I was not the foe of John Clarke or of the institution, two years ago, will be fully ascertained by the following extract, written by me, under those impressions of regard, as well as confidence, which had been excited by his own false statements and deceptive reports.

Argus, No. 1336, March 13th, 1807. "Of all the public institutions which exist in Virginia, there is but one whereon the eye of the patriot and philosopher can dwell with pleasure; where it can look with

satisfaction, turn away, and look again, with renovated delight! This is the manufactory of arms. The plan has been conceived with greatness, and has been executed with talents, taste and a general regard to public usefulness.

"The reflections which involuntarily arise, as relates to this establishment, are so different, so widely different from those which have occurred upon other objects, that I will not here disturb the pleasurable sensations, which this subject cannot fail to excite; and to me it is a cause of deep regret, that I cannot in justice to my own conscience, present results, or even cultivate hopes, as relate to others which are equally acceptable and delightful.

## FREEHOLDER.

Such were the liberal and generous sentiments by which I was actuated, in March, 1807? only two years ago!! At that time, like others, I was completely deluded, and in the spirit of honest confidence, devoted my pen to deceive others also.

Can any one believe, that at the time when this extract was published, I entertained one single emotion of hostility, against the officers or any other individuals, who at that time and long before, as I now know, had contributed to deceive and defraud the public?

I am assured by Mr. Ritchie, that I shall have a satisfactory opportunity of replying in his paper as soon as Clarke's defence, (as he calls it) is ended. But the method in which it proceeds, reminds me of a puppy running after his own tail; an endless and fruitless race!!

It is in the mean time proper to remind the reader of a very good rule to ascertain the quantum of truth contained in John Clarke's productions.

His first estimate for erecting the manufactory of arms, was forty thousand dollars, the money laid out, including the machinery, is about five times as much as his first estimate; according to this rule, not more than one fifth part of his productions are true. So far as relates to me, this rule is by far too liberal, unless when he is disposed to speak of my misfortunes, and then profuse as his imagination is, and prone to exaggeration, his genius is not sufficiently towering to do justice to the subject. What a pity that one so willing should want talents on so important and popular a theme.

But I ask, will the promulgation of my misfortunes, however great, restore life to those who have been murdered by the bursting of his worthless guns; or arm the militia in these times of peril with good and trustworthy muskets; or refund to the treasury almost half a million of squandered dollars?

An injured, deceived, and defrauded people, are anxious to hear how these points will be managed; and it is nothing to the purpose, whether I am blessed with the most propitious gales of prosperity, or compelled to drink from the bitter cup of adversity even to the very dregs, or be like Clarke himself, damned to everlasting fame.

Adverse as my fortune has been, chequered by numberless crosses, yet were they ten times more numerous and severe, they should they be all amalgamated, or brought against me in the most perplexing form, I would sooner meet, confront, and endure them all, than suffer that *hang of the soul*, which will be most surely excited in Clarke's bosom when he shall read this sentence.—Nor would I, great as his offences are, were it my lot to prescribe and execute the most stern and rigid justice, wish to inflict upon him any punishment more severe than to be himself.

It is from himself, he can never escape. His own bosom will be his perpetual hell. His own reflections, his tormentors. And tho' he may fly to the most inaccessible wilds, and call upon the rocks and mountains to hide him, still he will be forever wedded to that heart-rending conscience, which will accompany him wheresoever he shall go, and doom him to everlasting wretchedness.

The following description by Milton, of Satan, after his fall, is very suitable to John Clarke.

"O miserable, which way shall I fly? Infinite wrath, and infinite despair? Which way I fly is Hell; myself am Hell; And in the lowest deep a lower deep, 'Till I reach bottom, think me to descend, Much more I think, and deeper measure wide." Much indeed I am mistaken if this be not a correct representation of that depraved and wretched mind, which, for some time past, has been pouring out its miseries, its venom, and its vengeance, in the columns of the Enquirer.

## HENRY BANKS.

P. S. No man is more sensible than I am of the impropriety of using intemperate language, in a public print: but cases sometimes happen when it is unavoidable. That I have been extremely cautious and guarded in this respect, can be proved by more than a hundred columns, published in this paper and the Enquirer. In this case every impartial man must admit that I have had great cause, that I am not the offender, but have been provoked. It is true I might have defended myself in a manner to satisfy many readers; but if I had pursued that course there would have been no end to the contest. As well might a man, who is attacked in the street, merely endeavor to avoid the blows of a bully, and retreat into a place of safety. No, sir, they must be punished. It is the only argument which will reduce them to reason and make them passive; and tho' every man of manners and feelings, will regret to be so engaged, yet, in such a case, precisely as I do in this, he will feel, if he can feel at all, *self justification*.

On the retirement of the late President from office, the feelings of a grateful country were poured forth from every quarter. The citizens of Albemarle, eager on this occasion to express in the strongest manner, the affection and esteem which they felt for their neighbour and friend, had determined to meet him in a body at the extremity of the county, and conduct him home. Less however, they might, while obeying the impulse of friendship, inflict a wound on that modesty which has ever characterised him, it was thought best to submit to him this intention. In his reply, he expressed in the most obliging and affectionate terms, his

wish that his friends should not take, (as he termed it,) so much trouble, on his account. The idea was accordingly given up.

Subsequently, to wit, on the 6th of March, 1809. At a meeting of the people of Albemarle county, at the courthouse, William D. Meriwether was called to the chair; and Alexander Garrett appointed secretary.

"A committee was appointed to prepare an address to THOMAS JEFFERSON, late president of the United States, expressive of the feelings and sentiments of his countymen, on his recent retirement from office; and submit the same to the consideration of the people on Saturday next."

Wm. D. MERIWETHER, Chairman. Attest, A. GARRETT, Secretary.

"Accordingly at the meeting of the people of Albemarle, on Saturday the 11th March, 1809, William D. Meriwether was appointed chairman and H. Minor Secretary. The committee appointed on Monday last, to prepare an address to Th: Jefferson, reported the following, which was unanimously adopted, and Wm. D. Meriwether, Nimrod Banha, Dr. Charles Everett, Thomas W. Maury, and Dabney Minor, were appointed a committee to present the address to Mr Jefferson."

## TO THOMAS JEFFERSON,

Late President of the United States.

SIR, The inhabitants of Albemarle, your fellow citizens and your friends, beg leave to congratulate you on your return to themselves and to your native county.—They invite you to the enjoyment of that domestic happiness from which, your public services have so long abstracted you, and for which you have so fair a prospect.

In the bosom of your family, surrounded by your neighbours, and followed by the affections of a grateful country, they hope to see realised, those sweets of retirement, for which you have so often sighed, and to which they are now anxious, personally to contribute. While gratulations of love and applause from every part of the Union, testify the feelings of the nation towards you; we your countymen, strongly participating in the public sentiment, can have nothing to add, on the score of public gratitude; we hear with pleasure and delight, the pious and a free and grateful people attending their chief magistracy, as he voluntarily descends from the highest office of state, to the tranquil walks of private life; and we dare not express our feelings when we reflect, that the voluntary relinquishment of honors and of power restores to us a friend and neighbour, as exemplary in the social circle, as he is eminent at the helm of state.

The mariner, who has weathered the tempest and storms, feels a delicious pleasure in contrasting present safety with former peril; so the cares, the labours, the perplexities, the pomp, the turmoil, and the bustle of office, will doubly endear to you the calm enjoyments of domestic life. As individuals among whom you were raised, and to whom you have at all times been dear, we again welcome your return to your native county, to the bosom of your family, & to the affections of those neighbours who have long known, & have long revered you in private life. We assure you, sir, we are not insensible to the many sacrifices you have already made, in the various stations which have been assigned you by your country; we have witnessed your disinterestedness, & while we feel the benefits of your past services it would be more than ingratitude in us, did we not use our best efforts to make your latter days as tranquil and as happy, as your former have been bright and glorious.

On behalf of the meeting, W. D. MERIWETHER, Chairman. Attest H. MINOR, Secretary.

To which Mr. Jefferson returned the following answer.

To the Inhabitants of Albemarle county in Virginia.

Returning to the scenes of my birth and early life, to the society of those with whom I was raised, and who have been ever dear to me, I receive, fellow-citizens and neighbours, with inexpressible pleasure, the cordial welcome you are so good as to give me. Long absent on duties, which the history of a wonderful aera made incumbent on those called to them, the pomp, the turmoil, the bustle and splendor of office, have drawn but deeper sighs for the tranquil and irresponsible occupations of private life, for the enjoyment of an affectionate intercourse with you, my neighbors and friends, and the endearments of family love, which nature has given us all as the sweetener of every hour. For these I gladly lay down the distressing burthen of power, and seek with my fellow-citizens, repose and safety under the watchful cares, the labors and exertions of younger and abler minds. The anxieties you express to administer to my happiness, and the measure will of itself be complete, if my endeavours to fulfil my duties in the several public stations to which I have been called, have obtained for me the approbation of my country. The part which I have acted